Email: w3bmd@qsl.net
Website: www.qsl.net/w3bmd
Emergency Simplex: 147.570 MHz
Facebook: Indiana County Amateur Radio Club
REPEATERS: 146.910- PL: 131.8
444.975+ PL: 131.8/DMR CC1 TS2
TG 313037(Local), also TG 3142, 31422

ICARC NEWSLETTER

September 30, 2025

Thanks go to the ARRL Foundation for it's support of ICARC's future tower and repeater upgrades at it's remote site

Officers for 2025:
President – Craig Bigler, AB3XA
Vice President - Cass Fitzgerald-N3FLO
Treasurer - Chris Edwards, N3VFK
Secretary - Larry Freeman, N3LT

Additional Board Members for 2025
1. Bill Robinson-KC3ZAF
2. Stuart Younkin-WB3FBL
3. Phil Kopczyk -K3PJ
4. Robert Zugates-KB3JOF
5. Elmer Sorisio-KB3WG

LOCAL HAPPENINGS:

Activities at the remote site on Rhine Rd

September 6, 2025
There was another hot dog night on Saturday, September 6, but it was lightly attended. No report of the activities that night because the author was unable attend. It was an overcast evening so visibility was poor and the temperature was in the low 60's. Definitely not a good night for moon, star, or satellite viewing.

September 13
Another workday at Rhine Rd. Seven people showed up to help with back filling the guy wire holes, cutting the guy wires to length and measuring the loss in a 90 ft long section of the hard line. Much thanks to Bill McMillen for his skid loader work on getting the holes filled and the same thanks to Elmer, Dave, Deryl, Bill R., and Mike K. for all their work in getting the guy wires measured and cut as well as Dave & Elmer's work on The following photos may give you as sense of who all attended.(On site: Bill McMillen, Dave Steiner, Mike Kosalko, Elmer Sorisio, Bill Robinson, Deryl Mack, Larry Freeman). Photos courtesy of Mike Kosalko & Larry Freeman)

September 20, 2025
There was another Hot Dog night at the Rhine Rd. Site. It was an overcast but pleasant evening of fun and camaraderie. No star gazing or satellite viewing due to clouds but the conversation was great. There were 12 visitors, and plenty of food so it was a great night!

At least we didn't get any rain!

September 27, 2025
There was another "Last Saturday" event which involved several of ICARC members at the Rhine Rd. site cleaning old aluminum hardware (primarily long tubes, and flat Plates) and testing another section of 1/2" Andrews heliax (hardline) coax. Not a particularly exciting day but work got done. For the record, the coax section is approximately 86 ft in length and checked out on 450 MHz to produce a loss of 5.0 W (Pin=24.0 W, Po=19.0W)which calculates {(db=20Log$_{10}$ (Po/Pin)]approximately} to -2.03 db including the 3 type N connectors. The maximum loss for one Type N connector is approximately -0.3db and the minimum is approximately -0.1db. Therefore the MAXIMUM cable loss is approximately-(2.0-.3)=-1.7 db. This

calculates to a Maximum cable loss of approximately 0.065db/m. The MAXIMUM loss for type N connector loss is -0.3db, therefore the MINIMUM cable loss is approximately -(2.0-0.9)=- 1.1 db. This calculates to a cable loss of approximately -0.042 db/m (Avg. -0.053db) The nominal loss of factory new half inch Andrews Helix published on line is approximately -.047 db/m. The loss for LMR 400 is published as approximately 0.09 db/m. Therefore, the recovered hardline from the old tower is acceptable to be used on the new repeaters and tower.

Much thanks to the On site personnel: Cass, Elmer, Mike, Deryl, Phil, Dave D., Robert, & Larry, for their work.

September 30, 2025
Another work day at the Rhine Rd site with three people spending time putting "dead end" loops onto what will be the high end of the guy wires for the new tower. Six wires will be supporting the tower. The job was a bit more difficult than anticipated but it got done. Started at 9:00 am and completed by noon. The guy wires are now ready to be mounted to the tower. That Job will start on Thursday morning, October 2, 2025.

Announcements:
Remember the upcoming ICARC meeting on October 7, 2025, 6:30 pm at the Indiana, PA Eat 'n Park Restaurant.

The Eighth formal meeting of the ICARC Grant Committee was held on Tue, September 16, 2025.

The video links for the old tower take down are given below:

Links for Tower Take-down

Courtesy of Deryl Mack , KC3YZW

https://youtu.be/c1LG7SRu9b0

https://youtu.be/risblzrA_hY

https://youtu.be/zCV7vwqTMjk

The secondary repeater coverage is degraded due to the tower removal activity It will be reestablished as soon as possible.

Another Interesting Mode of Operation on the Rise:
There is a newer, digital weak signal mode of operation that that seems to be catching on:VARAC
It is a interesting mode in that unlike FT-8 and other modes it can ALMOST be conversational in that you can communicate keyboard-keyboard by typing your message and sending it as soon as you are done typing. There is no timed structure to the sequence. I suspect that many of you who do a good bit of FT-8 and FT-4 may be familiar with this. In any case take a look at the home page, you may find it interesting too. I've downloaded it but not yet tried it. Explore the home page at: https://www.varac-hamradio.com/

Reminder: The ICARC Public Service and Information Net happens on each Monday night starting at 8:30 PM using the W3BMD repeater on 146.91/146.31 Mhz. (ICARC is an ARRL affliated club).

Reminder: The ICARC meetings are scheduled for the FIRST Tuesday of each month; next meeting is Tue, October 7, 2025, located at the Indiana Eat n' Park restaurant in the backroom at 6:30 PM. Hope to see you there.

Current Net Control Operators: Phil Kopczyk, Chris Edwards, Stuart Younkin, Bill Robinson and Ralph Timblin. We thank you fellows very much. We can always use more.

Attention Technician and General licensees (and prospective hams), have you thought about upgrading? Do you have trouble making it to an in-person ham exam? Now you don't have that excuse. Groups holding online ham exams have greatly expanded. Some groups are having exams daily. Reportedly it is an easy process if you have a laptop, desktop or tablet with a camera and microphone. Below are websites where you can look into testing online.

https://wm7x.net/ One of the most popular. They have videos explaining how it's done.
https://kl7aa.org/vex/remote-testing/
https://hamstrung/sessions/remote Lists remote and in person test sessions.

From the ARRL Members Bulletin:

October 1, 2025 (Just published)

Amateur Radio Licensing Update During US Government Shutdown

The ARRL Volunteer Examiner Coordinator, ARRL VEC, wants members to know that we are closely following the impact of the US Government shutdown on licensing for the Amateur Radio Service.

The government shutdown began at 12:01 Eastern time on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, when Congress had not passed an appropriations bill or other plan to keep the government funded for the new fiscal year (begins October 1).

The Federal Communications Commission, which issues Amateur Radio Service licenses, issued a Public Notice on Tuesday, September 30, indicating that it would suspend most operations following a shutdown. "Aside from a few emergency and auction filing systems, all other Commission electronic filing systems will be unavailable to the public until normal agency operations resume," said the FCC Notice.

ARRL VEC Manager Maria Somma, AB1FM, said the FCC systems appeared to go off-line around 1 PM Eastern time, and are redirecting to the Public Notice. This means the FCC will not be processing any amateur radio license applications during the shutdown, which includes individual, club, and exam session (new and upgrade) applications.

"But ARRL Volunteer Examiners should continue giving exam sessions," said Somma. "Keep doing what you're doing. Keep serving new and upgrade candidates for amateur radio licenses." Somma also urged that Volunteer Examiners continue to promptly forward session results from their exams to the ARRL VEC.

"Please do not hold your session results. Send your sessions to us, and ARRL VEC will continue to queue all applications as they are received. Once the federal government reopens, ARRL VEC will promptly resume submitting applications to the FCC for processing. So, keep sending sessions to the ARRL VEC."

The FCC Notice indicates that the CORES registration system will remain available to the public and will not be affected by the shutdown. Exam candidates can still register in CORES and be assigned an FCC Registration Number (FRN) at https://apps.fcc.gov/cores/userLogin.do. The FCC's Universal Licensing System (ULS) databases are currently unavailable to the public. ULS and related systems (like the License Manager, License Search, Application Search, etc.) are not accessible during the shutdown. Users cannot file applications with the FCC, or access license data, including address information.

To find an amateur radio exam session, please visit www.arrl.org/find-an-exam. For a list of VE Teams that offer Online Exam Sessions, go to www.arrl.org/online-exam-session.

Pass The Bill

As a reminder, ARRL is continuing to collect letters from EVERY HAM as part of our grassroots campaign to pass the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act. The legislation is intended to prevent restrictive homeowners' association (HOA) rules that currently prohibit or severely limit the installation of amateur radio antennas. Send your letters now at www.arrl.org/HOA.

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

September 17, 2025
"The ARRL is focused on reducing legal restraints on the ability of American Amateur Radio Operators to engage in the active practice and enjoyment of Amateur Radio.

One of the most insidious and increasing threats to the survival of Amateur Radio and our ability to serve our communities and Nation, as we are required to do by Federal regulation, is the proliferation of private land use restrictions that prohibit the installation of outdoor antennas and that sometimes actually deny Federally licensed Amateurs from operating any amateur radios, regardless of where their antennas are located — in their attics, hidden in trees, or mounted on their vehicles."

By sending a letter to your Representative and Senators asking that they co-sponsor and support H.R. 1094 and S. 459 you may help relieve unreasonable restrictions put on Amateur Radio operators by Home Owner Associations and other private entities.

Go to — https://send-a-letter.org/hoa/ — enter your call sign and click on "Send My Letters" and your letters will be delivered to our Washington legislative team for hand delivery to your Representative and Senators

The following has been continued from previous ICARC Newsletters.

ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio® filed comments [PDF] with the Federal Communications Commission in response to its request for public input on alleviating unnecessary regulatory burdens by deleting or modifying rules, *In the Matter of Delete, Delete, Delete*. Implementing ARRL's suggestions would promote and protect the art, science, and enjoyment of amateur radio, and enhance the development of the next generation of radio amateurs.

In response to ARRL's request, over 200 members submitted suggestions that were reviewed when considering what rules should be deleted or modified. ARRL will continue to engage with members and advocate for the Amateur Radio Service.

In its filing, ARRL asked the FCC to delete or amend the following rules:

Delete the LF and VHF/UHF Symbol (Baud) Rate and Bandwidth Limitations

ARRL supports the deletion of these restrictions as proposed by the Commission in late 2023. Doing so would enhance Amateur experimentation with digital technologies.

Update and Modernize Entry Level Technician Class License Privileges

ARRL reiterated its earlier proposal for extending additional limited privileges for Technician class operators. Adopting its proposal would provide new licensees an introductory window to HF data and phone communications that are at the core of the Amateur Radio experience and serve to incentivize the next generation of technical leaders just as Novice CW HF privileges did for earlier generations of operators.

Modernize 80/75 Meter Sub band Divisions

ARRL requested action on an earlier proposal that would make more efficient and intense use of the 80/75 meter band. Changes in technology and modes since band usage was last addressed have resulted in overcrowding in one band segment that would be alleviated by adoption of ARRL's proposal.

Delete and Replace Obsolete Digital Code Limitations

ARRL also asked the FCC remove provisions that refer to digital codes that today are obsolete and permit Radio Amateurs to experiment freely with new digital codes, so long as such codes are publicly documented and decodable over the air.

Implement Changes to Third Party Rules Adopted Internationally at WRC-03

Although the United States fully supported changes to the ITU Radio Regulations in 2003 that removed a treaty requirement for third-party messages, there is no record of this change having been considered and the FCC's rules were never conformed to the new provision. Being the only nation known to continue to require a formal treaty for such purposes has resulted in no new such treaties for since the treaty changed more than two decades ago. Thus ARRL asked the FCC to Implement rules that are consistent with those internationally agreed to align with the rest of the world.

Delete Amplifier Drive Limitation

ARRL requested that the Commission act favorably on a pending proposal to remove limits HF amplifier gain that add to Amateur equipment cost and impede use of new efficient amplifier technology.

Remove Non-current Personal Information in Amateur ULS records

ARRL requested that the FCC complete a rule making in which it proposed that only current licensee information to be visible in the public (ULS) database. Right now, if an amateur changes their address to a Post Office Box to shield their home address, the previous address remains visible. ARRL advocates for protecting the privacy of radio amateurs.

Delete Obsolete Identification Requirement for Special Call Signs

Users of special event call signs are required to identify with the FCC-issued responsible call sign at least once

each hour. This can be confusing, especially on data and CW modes. ARRL proposed reliance on the web-based database that clearly identifies each special event call sign and authorized period of use.

Delete Obsolete Paper License Replacement Provision

The FCC no longer mails physical copies of amateur radio licenses, so ARRL suggested deleting the rule that provides for sending paper replacements as obsolete.

The FCC notice [PDF] generated a lot of interest among radio amateurs, with hundreds of Amateurs submitting comments directly to the FCC as well as responding to ARRL's request for suggestions.

The FCC deadline for filing reply comments is April 28, 2025.

It is hoped that the Commission will incorporate worthy suggestions in a future Notice of Proposed Rule making (NPRM) later this year. At that time there will be a new opportunity for public comment on the specific rules that the Commission proposes to delete or modify.

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act Re-Introduced
Legislation Will Increase Communication Options During Natural Disasters
WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., and Richard Blumenthal, D- Conn., and Representatives August Pfluger, R-Tex., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn. announced their joint re-introduction of legislation in the Senate and House to restore the right to Amateur Radio operators to install the antennas necessary to serve their communities. Homeowner association rules often prevent Amateur Radio operators from installing antennas at their homes even though Amateur Radio has proven to be essential in emergencies and natural disasters such as hurricanes when other means of communication fail.
"Mississippians should have access to every possible means of warning for natural disasters, including amateur radio operators. In an emergency, those warnings can mean the difference between life and death," Senator Wicker said. "The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act would remove unnecessary roadblocks that could help keep communities safe during emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and fires."
"When disaster strikes, amateur radio operators provide vital, often life-saving information, which shouldn't be hindered by prohibitive rules or confusing approval processes. The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act eliminates obstacles for ham radio enthusiasts, allowing them to continue their communications and serve their communities in the face of emergencies," said Senator Blumenthal.
"Natural disasters and other emergency situations that hinder our regular lines of communication are unfortunately unavoidable, which is why we must bolster our emergency preparedness by removing the barriers amateur radio operators often run into when installing antennas. Amateur radio plays a vital role in public safety by delivering critical information to people at all times. My district is home to dozens of amateur radio operators ready to volunteer in the event of an emergency, and I am proud to lead this legislation," said Congressman August Pfluger.
"As we know from recent natural disasters, amateur radio operators in Connecticut can be a critical component of disaster response and emergency management. It is in our communities' best interest that we give them the capabilities to operate at the highest level, and with the re-introduction of this bill, we've taken a strong step in that direction," said Congressman Court.
Background:

The Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 (H.R. 1094 and S. 459) would require homeowner associations to accommodate the needs of FCC-licensed Amateur Radio operators by prohibiting the enforcement of private land use restrictions that ban, prevent, or require the approval of the installation or use of Amateur Radio station antennas. Homeowner associations have often prevented installation and use of such antennas through private land use restrictions. This has hindered voluntary training for emergency situations and blocked access to necessary communications when disaster strikes.

Among other provisions, this legislation would:

Prohibit homeowner association rules that would prevent or ban Amateur Radio antennas;

Specify an approval process for installing Amateur Radio antennas;

Provide a Federal private right of action to Amateur Radio operators in disputed cases.

On behalf of America's Amateur Radio licensees, Rick Roderick, the President of The American Radio Relay League, re-confirmed the ARRL's full support for the passage of the Amateur Radio Emergency Preparedness Act of 2025 and extended his thanks and appreciation to Senators Wicker and Blumenthal and Congressmen Pfluger and Courtney for their unflagging leadership of the bi-partisan effort to support and protect the rights of all Amateur Radio Operators.

The text of the House version can be found at this link: https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Advocacy/HR1094_House_Private_Land_Use_Bill.pdf?_zs=ab8xl&_zl=9xlE3

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ARRL The National Association for Amateur Radio

Other Announcements of potential interest:

From the ARRL WEB Site: Grants to Amateur Radio Organizations: The ARRL Foundation grants program awards limited funding to organizations for eligible amateur radio related projects and initiatives, particularly those with a focus on educating, licensing, and supporting Amateur Radio activities. Youth-based projects and initiatives are especially encouraged. The ARRL Foundation grants program accepts proposals on a cyclical model three times a year.

2025 Grant proposals are accepted from:

- October 1 - October 31 _____

Attention: If other ICARC members would like to contribute to this Newsletter, please contact or submit articles to the Newsletter editor, N3LT via email at n3lt@arrl.net or wd4hoz@gmail.com by the middle of each month. Preferred document format is "**.doc"**, for editing purposes. **For future reference: Anyone providing photographs to the newsletter editor to be published should submit them in .PNG or .JPG format. Do NOT use the HEIC format introduced by Apple for its iphones. Super high resolution is not needed for the newsletter. None of my current, outdated, computer applications support the HEIC format. All submissions are subject to the approval of the editor.**

Minutes of August 5, 2025 ICARC General Meeting

Attendance: AB3XA, N3FLO, KC3DTE, N3DZ, N3VFK, N3LT, KA2YOS, K3PJ, N3ARA, W3CDH, N3DZ, N3UDI, K3VAR, WA3BDR,KC3ZAF,KD3BCW,KC3FVU, WB3DUD

The Vice President (Cass Fitzgerald) called the meeting to order at 18:34 hours local time
The Pledge of allegiance was recited ant he roll call was taken.

Treasurer's Report: No formal treasurers report was given but Chris indicated that there had been no unusual transactions and that he would present the report at the next meeting

Trustee's Report: No trustee's report due to absence of the trustee.

Secretary's Report: At Craig's request Larry handed the July 1 written minutes to Dave Steiner who read them to the membership. A motion was made and seconded to accept the report. It was voted upon and passed. (Larry noticed that he had made a mistake in the attendance and subsequently corrected the error for the final minutes. He did not mention this in the discussion)

Ian Bigler presented a nice report on the field day contacts upgrading the 361 logged contacts to 375 that were claimed in the final submission.

Potential activities were discussed with Phil starting by pointing that we should be doing a program at every meeting by members or others including non ham topics of interest such as the very memorable program presented by Karl Hovzda years ago on trains. It has stayed in Phil's memory all these years. He indicated that the travel time for these meeting is significant for many members who do not live near Indiana and it would make it more worthwhile for us all to learn something.

In support of this Craig indicated he felt there were enough knowledgeable people at the meetings to have a short, possibly impromptu program at each meeting session. Craig and Mike, suggested that there is ample ability of the club members to produce useful and interesting BS. Larry mentioned that he had invited Joe Shupienis to present a program on the WP Repeater Council, but had heard nothing from him. Ian also pointed out that Digital modes, Satellites, and antenna construction are very popular topics that lend themselves to interesting programs. Bill R. supported the idea of programs and mentioned that there has been a program at every Fort Armstrong club meeting that he has attended. Most are very interesting and got him interested in DMR. He volunteered to present a program on DMR. Paul volunteered to present a 15 min program on learning Morse code and how to send cw. Craig and others also that any program might be by two or more people as a team effort. Larry indicated that he would like to teach a class on introductory electronics. Someone suggested that would be good but might be better during the Winter. There seemed to be general agreement about a program at each monthly meeting.

Because we were displaced from our usual meeting room, Mike asked if there has been any movement on finding another location for the ICARC meeting. Larry, based upon his conversations with his pastor suggested the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Indiana, in that the room would be available any day except Wednesday and Sunday and the week when Vacation Bible School is going on. Craig calmed the discussion reminding us that we have been at the current location for many years and there is a tradition formed over the years. There was some discussion and it was decided that the full membership should be privy to any such decision. Dave S. Made a motion to send out an email to member polling them on possibly finding a new meeting location. Ralph seconded the motion. It was voted upon and passed. Larry volunteered to send the email to the membership.

Larry proposed bringing back the hot dog night at the Rhine Rd site. Craig indicated that we should put up an antenna there and do some HF radio. There was general agreement in the ensuing discussions and Cass made a motion to have “hot dog” night at the primary site located on Rhine Rd. each first and third Saturday evening of each month. It was seconded and voted upon and passed. The first event will be on Saturday,

August 16, 2025.

Craig brought up the PA qso party happening on Oct 11 &12, 2025. Larry made a motion for the club to participate and and Cass seconded the motion. It was voted on and passed. The possible sites are Rhine Rd, & Dave Steiner's place . It was suggested that Rhine Rd be the primary site and Dave's be a secondary site in case of poor weather. Dave also mentioned that the antenna ropes are still in the trees.

Craig also brought up planning for Jamboree on the Air for 2026, not for 2025 due to the necessary preparation. Joe R. indicated that it is always the 3rd weekend in October and that Troop 29 will be interested in participated and at least one other troop. He also mention that the scout leaders are trained and others from ICARC would not need the training. No motion was introduced on this.

Craig also mentioned that we already have the site reserved for Winter Field Day 2026 and asked what other activities do we want to do? He mentioned POTA activations, and Ralph spoke about it pointing out that state & federal parks, forests and game lands qualify. He specifically mentioned Yellow Creek Park as a possibility. It takes 10 contacts to qualify as an activation. County parks do not qualify for POTA activations. It was also suggested by someone that it could be done as a "hot dog" night event or more likely a "Last Saturday" event.

Ian mentioned Fox hunts and Phil suggested that the Fox be set up at Rhine Rd. to practice maybe as people come in to a "Hot Dog" night and some one mentioned it as a possible "Last Saturday" event. The idea of a county wide hunt was also suggested. Several members told stories of their fox hunt experiences. Dave D. asked that if it is county wide, will a location quadrant be given to the searchers to give an idea of where to start looking for the fox? Craig suggested that we not do that ever again. It was suggested that once we decide to have the hunt that a notification by email be sent out with the pertinent information.

Craig also brought up shack clean up pointing out all the unused stuff stacked at random. He stressed that we need to get rid of a lot of "the crap in the shack" and have a general cleanup.

Craig also brought up the idea of ICARC providing a free membership to Deryl Mack for as long as he wants to be a member because he and his family have been so supportive of our club by letting us do anything that we want at the site. Furthermore he owns the land and helps with projects and does the grass mowing. Walter S. Made a motion in support of Craig's suggestion and it was seconded by Larry. A vote was taken and it passed.

Cass revisited the "crap in the shack" and asked if we wanted to set a date. Decided there is too much going on right now so no date was set. Larry suggested that we salvage what we can and trash the other stuff. Craig pondered the meaning of "salvage"; Larry suggested selling anything of value or getting it to someone without having to pay them to take it. Ebay and Facebook Market Place were mentioned as venues that could be used. Someone said that we need to know if the equipment works and Larry suggested plugging it in and testing it. There was discussion about security with people coming to the site to buy or take stuff. It was pointed out that off site locations could be arranged with potential buyers for transactions to occur. Someone pointed out that we need to know what we have before we do anything.

Larry gave a brief progress report on the tower project pointing out that two holes done and one hole has a large rock that needs to be chipped away. The plan there is to rent a hydraulic jack hammer to attach to Bill M's skid loader and chip it away as needed. He reported that the cages were worked on Wed and Friday and were completed (August 1, 2025). He also indicated that he would make forms for the holes as well as making a jig, if necessary, for setting the anchor rods in the ground at the correct angle of 41 degrees from ground horizontal. He also indicated that we should do a double check on the ground exit points for the anchor rods just to be sure that everything is good. In addition he suggested we have another meeting of the full Grant Committee to set priorities for ordering other materials and such. Craig reminded us that we will need to rent a vibrator for settling the concrete as it's poured. There was some discussion concerning the forms and other aspects of the project. Craig thanked those who have been working at the site and

encouraged other members to take this opportunity to contribute to the project as they see fit.

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded and voted to adjourn
Craig adjourned the meeting at 7:54 PM

After the meeting Bill Robinson brought out his a DIY j-pole antenna made from TV twin lead that had been given to him. There was a bit of a show and tell describing how it was tuned and utilized. It was a fun addition to the meeting.